



# HENLEY ROWING CLUB

FOUNDED 1839

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Letter from the Chairman

29<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Dear Member,

As the new Chairman of Henley Rowing Club I am taking the opportunity of writing to you and keeping you informed of upcoming events both on and off the water.

Firstly, I would like to thank Ian Pankhurst for his Chairmanship over the past five years, a period of continuing change and success.

The greatest challenge the Club faces over the new few years is to maintain this progress in the face of increasing competition from other rowing clubs, as well as other demands on young peoples lives.

One of the greatest changes seen recently is the welcome increase in members helping at the Club, covering activities from coaching, to organising open rowing events, from catering to organising social events, giving their time and energy free of charge.

Whilst this is the foundation of the Club's success, we cannot function without financial support from outside.

Currently we are fortunate to have the continuing sponsorship of the **World Advertising Research Centre (WARC)** whose support was a major contribution to the Club's first ever win at Henley Royal Regatta in 2005.

However additional funds are required to support rowing activities and improve the Club facilities.

The new extension containing a purpose-built gym and additional changing facilities has been delayed due to lack of funds, but is an urgently needed facility.

The current land training arrangements are unsatisfactory for a club of our standing and will have an adverse effect on future performance.

Recently a number of members have formed a fundraising committee under the leadership of Margaret Hall. One of their first activities is the organisation of an **'Open Day'** to which a number of national and local businesses and local celebrities have been invited to see for themselves how HRC is helping the young people of Henley and surrounding areas. They will have the opportunity to meet club members and Olympic and World Championship medallists, and most importantly it is an opportunity to find out how they can help the Club achieve its aims and what we can offer in return.

The **'Open Day'** will be held on **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April from 2-4 p.m.** Our active rowers have agreed to be present and volunteers are required to help with catering and looking after our guests.

This will also be an opportunity to take the **annual Club Photograph**, so please turn up early (at around **1 p.m.**).

If you have any contacts that you think may be able to help the Club and who would like to attend the Open Day, please let me or Captain Ian Desmond know.

Fundraising isn't just about sponsorship. Other activities can raise funds in a smaller but no less significant way.

For instance, **how often have you found a collection of one and two pence coins in drawers, car ashtrays and pockets?** There will soon be a collection point in the Club for these 'unwanted' coins. Please look out for posters and make your contributions.

Fundraising can be fun too ...

On **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May** the **Annual Boat Trip** will take place at 6.30 p.m. on one of Hobbs cruisers. This is always an enjoyable social event and oversubscribed. So please sign up as soon as you see the posters in the Club, or contact Val Spatcher for details.

On the rowing front activity at the Club has never been greater. The Club currently supports sections of beginners, junior men and women, senior men and veterans (or Masters as they now like to be called).

Unfortunately at the moment we are unable to field a senior women's squad. This situation can only be corrected by recruitment of additional coaches.

However, our prime concern at the moment is the need for more assistance with beginners. Dave Scivier, who has done an excellent job teaching beginners for many years, is unable to continue full-time, and Captain Ian Desmond (Dessie) is looking for volunteers to run this section of the Club on a rota basis. This is a fulfilling activity and only takes up a couple of hours on a Saturday or Sunday morning.

It is vital that we maintain this activity as it brings more people to the club and into the sport, and encourages youngsters who may well be the future Olympic champions.

At Junior level the Club continues to excel with wins in domestic events at all age groups. We can rightly claim to be the top club in the country for Junior rowing thanks to the efforts of Chris Boothroyd, Paul Moss and their team of coaches.

**Currently we have five Junior members in line for International honours this year** and we wish them success in the Spring and Final Trials for the GB Team.

The Senior Men's squad, run by Dessie, is larger than ever before and on target to compete for medals at this years Henley Royal Regatta. By the time you read this we hope to be celebrating the Club's best Head of the River results for 30 years.

**Veteran rowing** at all levels of ability and age is now being run on an organised basis. If you are interested in rowing in a relaxed atmosphere please contact me, and I will put you in touch with the organisers.

Support for our teams at Regattas and Heads Races can help in our success. The Club has recently purchased a magnificent enclosed "**Gazebo**" in **Club colours** to provide a 'home from home' at the larger events such as the National Schools Regatta.

It is hoped that donations from those who will make use of this facility can help with its purchase. A small price to pay for shelter from the vagaries of the traditional bad weather at Nottingham.

Finally a reminder that **the club bar is open on Sunday lunchtime, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Wednesday evening is "Club Night"** when dinner is available thanks to Val Spatcher (please let her know numbers in advance). These are great opportunities to socialise, get to know other members and enjoy a drink at a wonderful riverside location. So come along with guests and make the most of your club.

Henley Rowing Club is looking forward to its most successful year ever. All our members can play a part in this and enjoy the fruits of success as described in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel S. Read

P.S. Many of you will receive this letter via e-mail. It is hoped that in future we can communicate with more of you in this way; it is a great saving to the Club. If you agree, then please provide your e-mail address to the new Club Secretary, Mervyn Theaker (mervyntheaker@hotmail.com).